NC Bio-Terrorism Initiative & DPH Health Alert Network

Project Overview

N.C. Division of Public Health

Preliminary Draft Document – 2/22/02

NC DPH Bio-Terrorism Response Plan

Implement surveillance and communications systems necessary to quickly detect and respond to Radiological, Chemical, and Bio-Terrorism attacks.

These integrated systems will provide an enterprise-wide solution that facilitates information sharing among local, state, and federal agencies.

Limitations of Existing Systems

- Physically fragmented infrastructure
- Dependency on complex, manual processes
- Limited data sharing/communication between agencies
- Disruptions to the surveillance & response processes
- Lack of real-time and consistent information
- Ability to control information access at multiple levels
- Security

Business Goals & Objectives

- Minimize the spread of deadly infections and reduce the impact of radiological and chemical contamination
  - Improve the State's ability to identify and arrest threats
  - Respond before major portions of the population are affected
- Provide timely information about eminent threats to local, regional, and state public health agencies and its citizens
- Ensure the confidentiality of information (including HIPAA)

Business Goals & Objectives *(Continued)*

- Implement a secure, redundant , and scalable technical architecture
  - Support communications and the dissemination of information among local, state, and federal agencies
  - Comply with the Statewide Technical Architecture Guidelines
  - Comply with Federal and Center for Disease Control Guidelines
- Support Distance Learning for NC's Public Health partners

System Features

- Threat Surveillance and Alert Program
  - Disease Surveillance
  - Automated Email, Pager, Voice, FAX notifications
- Secure and Fault Tolerant (High Availability, 7x24)
- Browser-based access to information
  - Data Entry
  - Reports & Queries
  - Resource repository w/search engine
  - Public bio-terrorism web site
  - Local health department access
- Connectivity to support Distance Learning
- On-line preparedness & response information

Open Architecture

- Based on industry standards
- Designed to facilitate the exchange of data between local, state, and federal agencies
- Component-based design makes systems adaptable to changing business needs
- Globally accepted security tools and techniques
- Accessibility
  - publish in multiple languages
  - W3C standards for citizens with handicaps
  - Email, Pagers, Fax, Phone, Browser, PDA, etc.

Long-Term Goals

- Support additional data collection sources for environmental threats
  - Animal and Livestock
  - Water Supplies
  - Agricultural
  - Emergency Management Systems
- GIS Analysis
- Incorporate prescription-based management (e.g., Quintiles, etc.)

Long-Term Goals *(continued)*

- Expand Connectivity for Public Health Partners
  - Universities (UNC, Duke, East Carolina, etc.)
  - Hospitals (infectious disease specialists, discharge data, etc)
  - Emergency rooms (NCEDD & NCHICA)
  - Immunization registry (Healthkey/PAIRS/ NCHICA)
  - Vital records
  - Public and private health organizations
  - Occupational & Environmental Health